GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
NEW AND RENEWABLE ENERGY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1896
ANSWERED ON:24.08.2007
SOLAR ENERGY
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Will the Minister of NEW AND RENEWABLE ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the utilisation of solar energy in the country continues to remain low and is under-utilized as compared to its full potential;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the kind of subsidies offered to popularize solar power in the country; and

(c) the other effective measures being taken by the Government to popularize solar energy?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NEW AND RENEWABLE ENERGY (SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR)

(a):Solar energy can be harnessed through two routes, namely solar photovoltaic and solar thermal, by direct conversion to electricity and heat energy respectively. The utilization of solar energy in the country is regularly increasing, however, the high initial cost of the solar energy systems is a barrier in its large-scale utilization.

(b):The initial cost of solar energy systems is high compared to the cost of conventional energy systems because of use of expensive materials, processes of manufacturing and some of thecomponents being imported, etc. However, the operation and maintenance cost of these systems is low as these do not require any fuel to run. The Government is supporting research and development projects to reduce the cost of these systems.

The Government is implementing several schemes to promote use of solar energy systems by providing Central Financial Assistance. The details of the Central Financial Assistance being provided for various solar energy systems under different schemes is given in the Annexure.

(c): The Government has undertaken a massive publicity and awareness campaign on renewable energy including solar energy through electronic and print media; by organizing exhibitions at national, regional and local levels; observing Rajiv Gandhi Akshay Urja Divas on 20th August throughout the country, establishing District Advisory Committees for renewable energy at district level and renewable energy clubs in large number of AICTE approved engineering colleges.